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The Theosophical Forum

ISSUED BY DIRECTION AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

For free distribution to members. The T. S. in America is not responsible for any statements herein, unless contained in an official document.

J. D. BUCK, President.

Each member is invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members should be careful to write distinctly and on one side of the paper only.

In sending questions, or answers to questions, whenever an assertion is made that such and such is a "teaching" or that "it is said in Theosophical literature," and the like, the name of author, article, volume, and page referred to must be given.

All communications should be addressed to **The Editor, Theosophical Forum, P. O. Box 1584, New York City.**

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question 113.

I would like to know something about chêlaship, and how one can get into touch with the Masters.

Cavé.—The subject these questions deal with—the relations of Master and pupil—and the training and struggle along the path which leads to the heights of adeptship, these have an interest profound. They induce thoughts which are to the mind like cool shady resting places in the fever and fret of life, or like a draught of water to thirsty lips. But though many are truly seeking, the most earnest share in the common heedlessness of the age, and overlook when they reach it, the very hint they have sought for so long. However it is not for those who understand, but for those who do not, that I will write and re-write, trusting that each time a new presentation may reach them, a new "voice crying in the wilderness" strike on their inner ears. Much has been said on this subject then, little understood, and this lack of understanding is largely due to the strangeness of the theme, and also that it is written in that inner language, that language of the soul, which few can read,

and which it is almost impossible to translate into the vernacular of the day. For the true language is one of vibration and picture, and our common speech is only a matter of set form and memory. So that when the attempt is made to put higher things into words, they lose their life and meaning, and become as cold and dead as the words which frame them, without energizing power and robbed of all possibility of awakening the soul. And yet the cry continually is to put these matters "plainly," denuded of imagery, and reduced to mathematical formula. True they could all be expressed by mathematical terms and figures, but in those planes or divisions of mathematics where the student must exercise the highest powers of the imagination—a faculty all great mathematicians have possessed in marked degree. So I repeat, the expression of inner truths in plain everyday speech is as difficult as to put a proposition of Euclid in words a child could comprehend. An approximation therefore, is the most I can hope for, and it must not be forgotten that the "plainer" the phrase, the more the "spirit" will be lacking. Yet since the need exists the effort is made to supply it. If it fail no harm is done, and it will have succeeded if only one soul comes into closer touch with the Helpers of humanity, or obtains one fuller glimpse of the life which all must ultimately lead, and the path along which they all in time must travel.

Chêlaship then, has two main divisions, which have been called the "probationary" and the "accepted." These terms will serve as well as any others. Now "probationary chêlaship" has also two main divisions, and these divisions are in fact two stages of meditation, so that the subject of meditation is the first to be dealt with. I do not suppose that in the entire range of theosophical thought and study, there is any subject of greater importance than this, or at the same time so little understood. It has been defined as "the cessation of active, external thought." To most that condition appears one of absolute negation, for most people live in their brains, identify themselves with its consciousness and are unable to conceive of a condition which is exclusive of active thought of some kind. To such people the first step is plain; they must learn to do this—they must learn to mediate. And therefore so much stress has been laid upon daily meditation, for until a man meditates daily and regularly he can go no further. The beginnings of chêlaship lie in this and in what grows out of it. The first effort then must be to take a regular time each day, and concentrate the mind upon some one thing, something of a spiritual and elevating

nature, something which will give food to the soul, though in the beginning this will be more of a *mental discipline* than anything else; for it is not easy to absolutely concentrate the mind, and it usually takes much time, persistence and patience to accomplish it. When however, this is accomplished, when the man has learned to concentrate his mind on any given subject, then as he daily practises this, he will attain during his periods of meditation that conscious condition, which is the true meditation, the "cessation from active, external thought." In this condition the mind is used *as an instrument*, the man's consciousness remaining behind or above it. In this way the man attains a *higher state of consciousness*, one which when it becomes habitual enables him to enter into communication with the Masters, and all who function on those higher planes of being. At first he learns to do this at stated times; gradually he learns to do it always, so that in the true sense he is always meditating. No matter how the body or the mind be employed, the true center of consciousness is never lost; the mind will be the man's instrument, and instead of identifying himself with the mind, mental activity will be carried on without his losing the consciousness of the real "I" in it.

This state of continual meditation constitutes the second degree; for when the disciple has reached it he finds his master waiting, and thereupon becomes an "accepted chêla." Under this heading of "probationary chêlaship" I have not discussed purification, but that I think almost goes without saying as a *sine qua non*, and there is nothing that accomplishes this as meditation does. "As a man thinks so he becomes." Meditation on a virtue causes it to spring up in the heart; meditation on the Master causes one to grow into his likeness, the likeness of the perfected man. And no man whose thoughts are always pure and high will be guilty of mean, low or sinful acts. These two therefore, this effort of continual meditation, accompanied by practise, the living out in the life what one thinks in the mind, constitute the *preparatian for chêlaship* or the probationary degree. And all of this the man must accomplish *entirely alone and unaided.* As the babe must learn to eat and digest for itself, though the loving care which surrounds it would help and save in every way, so with the neophyte in occultism (what St. Paul has called "babes in Christ"); there are certain steps he must take alone, certain things in which no one can aid him, however great the love and compassion which may long to do so. And this fact, that until these steps are taken, these certain things accomplished for himself, the Master can do nothing for him, must be

realized and its full meaning faced and accepted. For we cannot reach the Masters until we penetrate their plane. When we have so done, we find, each one finds his Master waiting.

And this is no figure of speech as some have taken it to be. When a man reaches his own Soul, he reaches the Master truly, for the "Master Soul is one," and so the Soul is often spoken of as the Master. But the Masters are living men, and the chêla is regularly taught and trained by his Master after he has been accepted, just as any pupil is by any teacher. So faith is needed. For a man can hardly hope to reach and communicate with those whose actual existence he doubts, and after a certain point the help and training of a Teacher is essential for further spiritual development. Until this point is reached however, the man must work alone, for how long depending entirely upon the length of time he may require to attain the indicated conditions. At the risk of being wearisome I must repeat this again and yet again, for *no one* seems to comprehend it, and all complain over it at some stage or other, which they would not do if they appreciated the inevitableness of it. Therefore this is in very truth a path of difficulty, for as he makes his first demands upon the Law, as he makes his first efforts towards another life, certain trials are sure to meet him. This demand and this effort have two sure results. They first of all arouse his whole nature, bring to the surface all that is in him, both of bad and good, and thus he finds himself assailed by an hundred faults and temptations which he has never known previously. Secondly his demand upon the Law brings the Law upon him. Before he can be an accepted chêla his past Karma must descend upon him and be measureably exhausted. So that just when he is striving to lead a better and a purer life, he finds troubles, difficulties, sorrows and burdens of all kinds descending upon him, and it is in the midst of this turmoil and struggle that he must teach himself, unaided, the control of mind and heart, and enter into that more spiritual condition known as continual meditation.

Blessed he who continues unfaltering to the end. This is the just and merciful Law, and one can easily see that it must be this way and no other. With the gradual unfoldment of time, the orderly progression of the ages, all will know and enter into these conditions, slowly, step by step, climbing the ladder of life. But he who determines to seize his heritage now, by main force, can expect only a fierce combat, for he takes with one blow what others will toil for through centuries.

Of accepted chêlaship little has been told. What need? The

Master instructs his disciple then, and those who have not reached that stage are wiser to concern themselves with the needs and aspirations of their own condition. The eastern books tell us of four divisions, and give them names.* After these stages are passed the man is "more than man," and if he choose aright at that great day of choice, then "all Nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim Joy unto ye O men of Myalba, A pilgrim hath returned back 'from the other shore'; A new Arhan is born."

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.

FOR THE USE OF BRANCHES.

The following subjects are supplied as being suitable for discussion at branch meetings. They are by various students who have had experience in conducting such meetings. It should be clearly understood that statements made herein are *suggestions for discussion*, are not official, nor in any way authoritative. Similar outlines will be gladly received by the editor, who reserves the right to make such alterations in their construction as may seem advisable.—EDITOR.

YOGA.

Meaning of the term is union. Usually associated with a system of Philosophy taught by Patanjali, with the object of attaining union with the Supreme. Two main divisions; Hatha and Raja Yoga. The effort of the former to affect the consciousness by means of physical exercises, breathings, etc. Its difficulties, dangers, and evils. The effort of the Raja Yoga to change the state of consciousness by a process of spiritual growth and purification. Meditation the first necessity. Why? Yoga in this sense similar to "Devotion" as used in the Bhagavad-Gita. Various ways of attaining Yoga, or union, as therein innumerated. The effect of each of them in purifying the man, physically, mentally, Karmically, or spiritually. Their effect upon the will.

REFERENCES.

Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms. Bhagavad-Gita. The Path, vol. v., p. 367, vol. vii., pp. 75, 102, 153; Lucifer, vol. iv., p. 387.

BUDDHISM.

Life of Guatama, the Buddha. Born in the sixth century B. C. The miracles related of his birth and life. His youth and marriage; his renunciation. His visions, trials, struggles and temptations. The parallel of many of these in the life of Jesus, the Christ. Considered as symbols. The possibility of considering the actual lives of the great teachers of humanity as typifying the development and life of the Soul. The teachings of Buddha. Their source. His effort to revive the spirit of the older faith of Brahmanism, from the dead letter of the priesthood. The great stress he laid upon moral training rather than upon the ritual, metaphysics, or penances of Brahmanism. The similarity of the teachings

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* See *Voice of the Silence.*

of Buddha and Christ. Theosophy and Buddhism. Essential elements of Buddhism : the five or seven fold constitution of man ; Karma ; Reincarnation ; the Four Truths ; the Four Paths ; the Ten Fetters ; Nirvana. The error of the assertion that Buddhism denies the existence of the soul, as also the more common fallacy of considering Nirvana as annihilation. Origin of this misunderstanding. Northern and Southern Buddhism. Sacred Books of the former in Sanscrit, of the latter in Pali. Modern Buddhism ; despite its degeneracy, dogmatism and superstition, the firm hold it has of many truths of supernature. Its reverence for and belief in Mahatmas. 40% of the population of the earth Buddhists ; not over 26% Christians. Difference between Esoteric and Exoteric Buddhism.

REFERENCES.

Buddhism, by T. W. Rhys Davids. Secret Doctrine, vol. i. pp. xvii, 47, 539, vol. ii. p, 637. Key to Theosophy, pp. 12, 13, and 14, and p. 77.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT.

An universal ethereal medium penetrating everywhere. Its special characteristic being self-luminosity. The ether of science. The register of all past events, thoughts, and acts. Its dangers, powers, and effects. The earth's second principle. Its degeneracy owing to the sins of men, hence man's responsibility for the future. The astral creations of the present become the physical manifestation of the future. Its influence upon men. Epidemics of crime and disease. Pictures in the Astral Light. Its influence upon dreams. Its inhabitants. Their grades and classes. The Serpent of Genesis is the Astral Light. Its double vibration. Reversal of images.

REFERENCES.

The Astral Light, by Nizida. The Path, vol. ii. pp. 77, 138, 180 ; vol. v. p. 217 ; vol. vi. p. 178.

SCIENCE AND OCCULTISM.

Difference of method between the two. Science working from without in ; Occultism from within out. Difference in scope of the two heretofore existing. Consequent hypothetical character, breaks, and missing links in scientific research. The gradual invasion of Science into the domain of the Occult. Its recognition of the ether, and that electricity, magnetism, gravitation, and light are etheric forces. The ether of Science and the Astral Light of Occultism, and how they correspond. The results of the scientific investigations of hypnotism and magnetism. The modern study of psychology and its shortcomings. The necessity of recognizing the seven principles of man before its results can be of much value.

REFERENCES.

The Path, vol. vi. pp. 242, 350, 379. Theosophy, vol. xi. p. 370. Occult Science in Medicine, by Franz Hartmann.

NOTICE TO BRANCH SECRETARIES.

Branch Secretaries are requested to write the Editor of THE FORUM in reply to the following queries :

1. Does your Branch use these subjects for discussion ?
2. Do you think they are of sufficient value to justify their continuance ?

3. Have you any suggestions to offer which would make this department of more value to Branches and students?

4. Are there any special topics which you would like discussed?

Editor FORUM,
P. O. Box 1584.
New York City, N. Y.

THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

THE CONVENTION.

An epitome of the proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America continued at Cincinnati, Ohio, May 29th, 1898, is given below, and following it are given in full such of the papers referred to in the account as seemed to be of sufficient interest to warrant publication.

Called to order at Convention Hall, Grand Hotel at 10.30 A. M. by Mr. A. H. Spencer, Acting President, who announced that the Convention was to be held in continuance of that commenced at Chicago on Feb. 18th last, and which was suspended by default.

Business was then taken up and the Convention conducted as follows, 106 members being present.

Address of welcome by Dr. J. D. Buck.

Election of Dr. A. P. Buchman, Temporary Chairman and Dr. T. M. Stewart, Secretary.

Committee on credentials appointed who reported 33 Branches represented by 54 delegates or proxies.

Drs. Buchman and Stewart elected Permanent Chairman and Secretary respectively.

Foreign reports and letters of greeting read.

Offer of Oriental papers for FORUM by Mr. Charles Johnston received and accepted

Reports of Acting President and Treasurer received and accepted.

Committee on Resolutions appointed.

Recess for two hours.

Session resumed at 2.30 P. M.

Reading by Dr. Buck of H. P. B's letter to Chicago Convention 1888.

Resolutions adopted as follows:

1. Re-affirming Proclamation adopted at Boston Convention of 1895.

2. Making By-laws of Branches invalid if disapproved by the President *and Executive Committee* of T. S. A.

3. Repealing the obligation of three members of the Executive Committee to reside near the President.

4. Authorizing the President and Executive Committee to continue such legal proceedings as may in their judgment be necessary to recover possession of the properties of the Society now in dispute.

5. That the Theosophical Society in America in Convention assembled at Cincinnati on May 29th, 1898 does hereby declare its purpose to continue the organization as heretofore under the Constitution adopted at Boston in 1895 and its regularly adopted amendments.

Vote of thanks to Mr. A. H. Spencer for services as Acting President.

Letter read from Mr. E. T. Hargrove.

Officers for the ensuing year elected, viz: President, Dr. J. D. Buck; Vice-President and Treasurer, Mr. A. H. Spencer; Executive Committee, Messrs. Buchman, Harter, Main, Ludlow, Phelps and Coffin.

Mr. George E. Harter then called attention to the obligation which each member should assume towards the expense of conducting the Society's business and providing means of propaganda, and urged the wisdom and excellent results of monthly contributions.

The Treasurer expressed his approval of Mr. Harter's scheme and recommended that it be continued as a regular dependence in addition to the fees, yearly dues, etc. of the Society's exchecquer.

On motion of Mr. J. A. Knapp a special collection amounting to $125.00 for instant expense was then taken up.

Recess.

Met again at 8 P. M., Dr. Buck in the chair and about 300 persons present.

Addresses were made as follows:

"What Constitutes True Brotherhood," by A. H. Spencer.

"Theosophy and Science," by Dr. A. P. Buchman.

"The Commonsense of Theosophy," by Geo. E. Harter.

"The Philosophic aspect of Theosophy," by Dr. J. D. Buck.

Adjourned.

Met again at 10.30 A. M., May 30th.

Votes of thanks to officers, etc.

General remarks and discussions relative to Branch work and propaganda.

Adjourned *sine die*.

Report of A. H. Spencer, Acting President, to Convention at Cincinnati, O., May 29th, 1898.

Fellow Members of the Theosophical Society in America:

Upon my assumption of the office in which your Executive Committee placed me on February 19th last, I found the Society in the throes of a severe crisis.

A convention had been called to meet at Chicago on February 18th for the presumed purpose of transacting the business pertinent to and usual at our annual Conventions, such as receiving the reports of Officers, Committees and Delegates, the election of officials for the ensuing period, the adopting of proper measures for the conducting of the Society's affairs, etc.

Instead of accomplishing these objects in an orderly and commendable manner, consistent with the gravity of its interests and the dignity of the occasion, your convention permitted itself to be overthrown, stampeded and finally revolutionized into becoming the servile instrument of a certain ring or coterie of its members. These under the manipulations of an alleged "Leader and Official Head," had privately concocted and perfected a scheme wherein by methods not theretofore attaching to Theosophical activities, it was attempted to deliver over the "Theosophical Society in America" to the use, benefit and aggrandisement of a single individual, to wit, Mrs. Katherine A. Tingley, by merging the Society into another body called "Universal Brotherhood," over which the said Mrs. Tingley was to be placed with all the powers and functions of absolute dictatorship and apparently without any restraints or restrictions whatever, except those of her own choosing.

Your Convention appears to have from this point abandoned its duties, declining to elect officers or provide the necessary machinery for a continuance of the organization and may be said on the whole to have gone by default. The former Vice-President and Treasurer, Mr. E. A. Neresheimer, who had recently been also the Acting President, together with three members of the Executive Committee having deserted their offices, the three remaining members of the Executive Committee, viz, Messrs. Buck, Buchman and Spencer, in accordance with the Constitutional provisions applying, proceeded in parlor W of the Palmer House at Chicago, on February 19th, to fill the quota of the Committee by the election thereto of Messrs. Geo. E. Harter, Geo. M. Coffin and Wm. Ludlow, and then elected me Vice-President and Treasurer. I thus becoming Acting President, and hence *ex officio* member of the Executive Committee, Mr. Wm. Main was then added.

Upon taking up the duties of my office I found the entire paraphernalia of the office, consisting of archives, records, correspondence, seal, etc., to be in the possession of Mr. E. August Neresheimer and Mrs. Katherine A. Tingley, neither of whom had in my belief any right or title to such possession. I therefore, by direction of your Executive Committee, after making formal demand upon those persons for said properties and being refused, entered suit for recovery of same in the Superior Court of New York. An injunction was promptly granted, restraining said Neresheimer and Tingley from the use or removal of such properties and requiring them to show cause why the injunction should not be made permanent and a receiver appointed. An answer to this complaint was filed in due form and upon its hearing our injunction was vacated upon the ground that our complaint had been unfavorably drawn and that our claim as based upon it was not valid. The actual hearing in the suit is thereby postponed until the Fall Term of Court.

In the meantime I have been obliged to conduct the business of my office with the sole assistance of an old and very incomplete roster of the Society's membership, consisting of about 2700 names, secured from Dr. T. P. Hyatt, of Brooklyn to whom it had been previously furnished as an aid in obtaining subscriptions to the magazine called "Child Life," then published by him.

By further direction of your Executive Committee measures were taken to establish a regular monthly edition of "The Theosophical Forum," four issues of which have up to this date been published and gratuitously furnished to all persons named in the list above referred to.

From correspondence received to that effect I have ascertained that a body of our members, in number amounting to between seven and eight hundred, have distinctly and decidedly repudiated the action attempted to be taken at our Chicago Convention of February 18th, and the attempt made to merge the T. S. A. into the organization called "Universal Brotherhood." These members have indicated their intention to uphold the methods and purposes of the original T. S. A. as officered by myself and the Executive Committee established at Chicago on February 19th last, consisting of Messrs. Buck, Buchman, Harter, Coffin, Ludlow and Main, and there are natural reasons for assuming that many more of the old members will afford their support of our present organization after they shall become better acquainted with the facts of the situation.

It is my belief, based upon a consideration of the views expressed to me by many of our members (both those who still adhere to us and others who prefer to diverge), that the elements of Theos-Sophia should be more carefully studied and considered in order that the purposes of our organization should be better understood. To this end I recommend that as soon as may be found practicable a series of plainly-expressed, elementary essays, together with extracts and excerpts collated from approved former publications. be published in pamphlet form and promulgated amongst our members in accordance with the second of the categorical objects of our Society. If a proper system of regular monthly donations could be established and maintained, the proceeds thereof might enable these publications to be furnished to the members gratis, and such would in my opinion constitute the very best means of theosophical improvement to which our funds could be applied.

As to Branches. It would seem in the highest degree desirable that organized centers of effort should exist in as many localities as possible, such serving as foci of attraction to inquirers as well as means for the radiation of knowledge in and about their neighborhoods. While admission to Branches should not be denied to any lawfully behaved person, I believe endeavor to urge or coax people to become members should be avoided. Those who come into our Society of their own desire and with the object, not so much of what benefits they may obtain for themselves, as in order that they may learn how best to assist others, is the material of which the Theosophical Society should be composed. Experience has shown that increased membership procured through excited emotion or through mere friendliness to present members is unstable and sure to be followed sooner or later by unfavorable reaction, engendering repeated and constant disruptions in order to obtain a proper constituency. It is improbable that all persons shall find their best sphere of usefulness in the Theosophical Society and care should be taken not to impose the duty of one upon another. Hence, while the largest membership consistent with the possession of a reasonable degree of discernment, endurance, intellectual apprehension, and spiritual aspiration is of

course desirable, care should be taken that those qualities are made the basis of such membership and in their absence, it were better to have fewer in number and thereby finer of quality. The Theosophical Society should in my opinion be thus constituted, not that the members may be more agreeable to each other, but in order that they shall be fitted to understand the principles of Theosophy and to disseminate them intelligently to others less favorably circumstanced. I further beg to suggest for your consideration the advisability of a quiet, introspective and recuperative attitude during the approaching summer applied personally, as well as to the organization to the end that by the fall of the year, we shall individually and collectively have attained to an increased power and concentrated effort to be directed no less effectively than unselfishly towards the good of mankind.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

A. H. SPENCER,
Acting President.

LETTER FROM THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN EUROPE.

COMRADES:

You are now holding a Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, and we send you our heartiest and most sympathetic greetings. We do so not merely because it is a Convention to the deliberaions of which all members of the T. S. look with sympathy and pleasure, but because it is held during a time of crisis—a crisis which means more than any of us can imagine.

The T. S. is at the cross roads, and we have the choice to pass on to one or another of them. It is to the deliberations now held that we have to look for guidance for the future conduct of the T. S. In the past we have had to be tested on our loyalty to leaders, then on our loyalty to principle, and now again our loyalty to one another in the bond of fraternity.

Therefore it is to you in America where the second great stand for principle was made, that we others look for the working out of the great principle of fraternity which may develop in human life and make of the human race a fitting receptacle in which the spiritual wisdom of the new race may find a home.

In this work we may all share and ours at least may be the sympathetic greeting which we send you. for in the action you have taken to preserve the Autonomy of the T. S. you are preserving the freedom of the members in the interdependence of fraternity in which may blossom the flower of the soul under the guidance of the Universal Law.

There is no short road to this achievement, and in our belief the T. S. was founded for this purpose. It grew and evolved under the care of H. P. B., not as school of occultism, but as a school for the training and evolution of the mind on certain philosophical principles, to form a foundation from which other and more subtle studies might be entered upon with safety to the student and his fellow-men.

But that work was to be accomplished by individual effort in accordance with a common ideal. Such is the process of evolution and the natural laws become sublimated to the spiritual.

Therefore we greet you again and stretch out the hand of fellowship going forward in fearless determination to carry out our trust and even if we apparently accomplish little, we may lay the foundations upon which others in later centuries can erect the fulcrum from which the world will be moved.

Let us to our own selves be true and to the great principles of compassion and toleration, and by our fruits shall our truth be known.

Letter from Mr. E. T. Hargrove, received with approval and ordered to be spread upon the minutes:

NEW YORK CITY, May 23rd, 1898.

To the members and delegates of the Theosophical Society in America in Convention assembled at Cincinnati, Ohio, May 29th, 1898.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW-MEMBERS:

Though it will not be possible for me to attend this Convention in person, I desire to convey to you my heart-felt good wishes for the success of your deliberations.

It has fallen to your lot to "*keep the link unbroken.*" I am sure that you will do it. I am, as always fraternally yours,

(*Signed,*) E. T. HARGROVE.

PROCLAMATION OF 1895.

The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in first Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of theosophy and members of theosophical societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and cooperation.

To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race or religious belief, whose intentions aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of man and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose effort is directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

And lastly, it invites to its membership all those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE T. S.

Fellow members. All thoughtful people recognize the fact that however spiritual the ideals, or however altruistic the objects of a Society, some money, more or less, is required to carry on the machinery of its organization. In the case of the T. S. A. no salaries are paid to its officers, nor any subsidies to its writers. Printing, postage, wages to clerks, and rent constitute its ordinary expenses. At the present period we have added to these the extraordinary item of legal expenses which have been somewhat heavy and are liable to continue so for a time longer. The concentration of the Headquarters at Cincinnati will, it is believed, enable the Executive Committee to keep the ordinary expenses down to a very low point. There will probably be no round the world excursions at four thousand dollars a head, no personal travelling expenses, no editorial salary claims, no purple silk collars, no carriages, no bouquets. These pleasant little accessories may be missed, but in their place we may hope to have such means of study and improvement by way of literature and lecturers as can be afforded by aid of the financial assistance which the members shall see fit to render.

Now the dues of most of our members were paid in before the Chicago Convention and have gone the way of all flesh. From this source, then, for the present year our treasury will receive practically nothing, and we shall have to depend entirely upon donations.

Mr. Geo. E. Harter, of Dayton, Ohio, by agreement and with the hearty approval of Mr. Judge, established some years ago a system of monthly collections, which realized a very fair sum in the aggregate; and he has now consented to revive this institution. I therefore recommend and advise that *every single member* from the President down take upon himself the duty, the burden if you like, of sending to Mr. Harter, a stated sum on or about the first of each month. Do not, I pray you, ignore this suggestion. Do not refrain from committing yourselves to an obligation for fear you may find it inconvenient at some future time to comply; that emergency could and would be taken care of if it arose. Do not be ashamed to name a small amount if it is all you can righteously spare to the purpose. Do not leave it to a few friends to be your financial godfathers or mothers while you dilate in speech upon the incongruities of vicarious atonement.

Now the T. S. A. will be run as cheaply as is decently possible, every dollar will be publicly accounted for, and every dollar will be returned to the world at large in some shape or form, acceptable to the members of the Society. What we shall be able to give out to the "great orphan humanity," will naturally be limited by its cost, and it will be much or little, according as you shall provide the means. If only a generous few respond it will be little; if all take a hand, we shall soon have a flourishing and important propaganda. Send then your regular monthly contributions to Mr. Harter, your regular fees, dues, and Charter fees to Dr. J. D. Buck, and your special, or emergency donations to myself.

Fraternally yours,

A. H. SPENCER, Treasurer T. S. A.,
P. O. Box 1584, New York City.

FOREIGN NEWS.

The FORUM is very glad to be able to announce the receipt of excellent news from Australia. Mr. E. J. Redman, of Sidney, N. S. W., writes that out of a total membership of 138, no less than 78 have declared their intention of maintaining their connection with the Theosophical Society and have repudiated the efforts of the agents of "Universal Brotherhood" to capture and stampede their organization. The following letter was sent to all members.

OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE T. S. A. (N. S. W.)

173 Liverpool Street,
SYDNEY, 14th April, '98.

FELLOW MEMBERS:

Most of you are aware that for some time past a movement has been on foot in America, having for its aim the annulling of the constitution of the T. S. and the conversion of that Society into a "literary" branch of a new Society, to be called "Universal Brotherhood." The movement came to its fruition at the Annual Convention of the T. S. in America, when the majority of delegates—by illegal means which you will know by reading what follows—carried a vote in favor of its adoption.

You are also aware that a similar movement has lately been, and is still being, attempted here in Sydney. But you are perhaps not all aware of the means and ways used to force the concurrence of our members while they were still in the dark as to the *principle* involved, and therefore incapable of forming an independent opinion.

You will remember that at the recent Annual Convention of the T. S. A., held here in Sydney before particulars *re* the result of the American movement had come to your knowledge, the Executive sprung a resolution on the unwary delegates, pledging the T. S. A. to certain undefined lines—undefined in so far that the delegates had at the time no idea of the real object in view, viz.: the annihilation of the T. S. as such. When, shortly after, a few members were cautiously made acquainted with (one side of) the real issue, the Executive (consisting of the Presidents of our two divisions, N. S. W. and N. Z.) were called upon to convene a new and special Convention, where delegates could vote with all the facts of the case clearly before them. The Executive refused, on the Jesuitical plea—*that the Society had already pledged itself, through its delegates, to any future action that might be taken;* therefore, also, to the abolition and destruction of the autonomy of the T. S., and its conversion into a subservient branch of another Society, ruled on the glorious principle of absolute autocracy.

Having thus failed to obtain justice from the Executive, an appeal was made to the President of the N. S. W. Division to at once have the printed new Constitution of the American Brotherhood Society circulated amongst you ; but, notwithstanding the distinct instruction received from America, to pass the printed papers on to our members, the President for a long time held them back, and instead called a special meeting, not of the T. S., mark well, but of the E. S., where, contrary to one of the fundamental rules of the E. S., this purely administrative and debatable matter of the exoteric Society was introduced. All the while, members were kept in complete ignorance as to the real facts of the case.

Seeing the injustice of these light-shirking and untheosophical proceedings, four members of your Council (Messrs. Marshall, Redman, Hudson and Dwyer) requested the President to call a General Meeting of the N. S. W. Division to discuss the matter in an open and friendly way ; but, notwithstanding that the requisition of one counsellor only is required to summons a meeting, the President has seen fit to totally ignore the request.

Now, we the undersigned, are *determined* that you shall have full light on *both sides* of this matter ; that you shall have an opportunity to think it over by and for yourself ; and that you shall then, at the earliest date possible, have an opportunity to record your vote for Delegates to the General Meeting of the N. S. W. Division, where the whole question will be dealt with in a legal, fair, and open manner.

You have hitherto been shown one side only of the medal. We here present the other. All we now ask is that you think long and without fear ; that you carefully weigh the *pros* and *cons* in the only true balance you have—your conscience and reason. Then cast your vote according to your conviction—and you have done your duty.

There is no religion higher than Truth !

Yours fraternally,

C. A. MARSHALL, President Central Lodge.
C. B. HILLIARD, Vice-President do
A. E. WILLIAMS, President Harmony Lodge.
J. BROWN, Vice-President do
J. DWYER, President of Isis Lodge.
T. BROWN, Acting Vice-President Isis Lodge.
C. HUDSON, President Thibetan Lodge.
E. J. REDMAN, Treasurer N. S. W. Division.
THEO. SODERBERG.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALASIA.

(New South Wales.)

Headquarters, 173 Liverpool Street.
SYDNEY, 22d April, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER SPENCER :

At the direction of the New South Wales Division of the T. S. in Australia, I write you particulars of our position here with regard to the original T. S. and the new organization known as "Universal Brotherhood." It gives me great pleasure to say that out of a total of 138 members no fewer than 78 have signified their desire and intention of remaining in the old autonomous Society. Further than this, it is not improbable that more will follow, as all have not yet signified either way, and some few have withdrawn altogether. At the beginning of this affair there were a few of us who stood together and who imagined themselves as standing apart from the greater number; but, as the result shows, a great and pleasant surprise was in store. There is but little doubt that matters would not have been so satisfactory had it not been for the prompt action taken in having copies of the FORUM printed and sent to each and every member. As the cost of printing is considerable in Sydney, we omitted certain parts which were considered to be of less importance than others. (I send a copy herewith.) This was prefaced by an open letter signed by several—as you will see—putting certain facts before those who were ignorant of how things were going on. This circular was followed by a second (inclosed) from the Council. Within a day or two of the sending out of this we received by the American mail Hargrove's letter from the "N. Y. Sun." This being considered of extreme importance was also printed and forwarded to all members. It will be of interest to American comrades to know that similar tactics have been the order of the day here as in America. The President of Division, has kept all information to himself except that which would influence members to Mrs. Tingley's side. The constitution of "Universal Brotherhood" was never brought before a meeting of Council, Division or Lodge; and although it was to be handed on to members such was never done but to a few. * * * * * * *

In the last number of the magazine "Universal Brotherhood" (March), there appears a cablegram from Sydney to say that the Colonies are "solid for Universal Brotherhood." This must have been sent after the convention here, though none knew of it. * * *

We will be holding a general meeting within a few days to elect a President and a Vice-President of the Division.

Wishing American comrades all success, I am

Fraternally yours,

ETELA J. REDMAN,
Treasurer and Acting Pres.

The following notice was sent to all members of the T. S. in E. (E.) Beyond the interchange of cabled greetings no report has yet been received of the meeting :

NOTICE.

To all Members of the T. S. in E. (E.).

As the gentlemen whose duty it would have been by virtue of their office formally to call, pursuant to the Bye-Laws, the General Annual Meeting of this Society have abandoned their membership therein, it has devolved upon the undersigned as members of the Council having charge of the Society's business to summon the said General Annual Meeting to take place on Whit Monday, the 30th May, 1898, at 10.30 in the forenoon, at Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, London, W.

The proposed programme is annexed.

Members are invited to bring friends to the meetings.

Any suggestions or resolutions, if sent to Mr. Green, 141 Alderney Street, London, S. W., will be duly brought before the meeting.

RICHARD TROOD, President, H. P. B. Branch.
HOWARD H. BIRT, President, Bow Branch.
J. K. GARDNER, President, Southport Branch.
JASPER FAWCITT, President, Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch.
THOMAS HOGG, President, Durham County Branch.
JOSEPH WILKINSON, President, South Shields Branch.
R. A. V. MORRIS, President, West Middlesex Branch.
ROWLAND BUXTON, President, Scarborough Branch.
C. H. HASSAL, President, Farnworth Branch.
ARTHUR S. WENT, President, Colchester Branch.

To Members of the Theosophical Society in America.

Acting on their rights as members of the T. S. A. accorded by its constitution, Thirty-three Branches, represented by delegates and proxies, met in Cincinnati, May 29th and 30th in Convention.

The purpose of such Convention was to reaffirm the principles upon which the T. S. was originally founded, to elect officers and to declare continued and unwavering allegiance to the Constitution and By-laws of the T. S. as existing prior to February 18th, 1898. Such allegiance, however, does not preclude alterations or amendments of Constitution or By-laws in a legitimate manner, as therein provided, but in no other way. The object of the Cincinnati Convention, and of those there present or represented, was not and is not to oppose brotherhood, or to antagonize a society organized at Chicago, February 18th, 1898, and called Universal Brotherhood. We insist upon the right, and emphatically declare our intention to maintain the old T. S. A. as left by Mr. Judge, and refuse to accept as a substitute for it the Universal Brotherhood or anything else yet proposed. While we insist upon and will maintain by all just means our right and determination, no less than our duty to do this, we accede to all others the equal right to accept the Universal Brotherhood with its Leader and Official Head, or to join any other organization, or none, as they may elect.

This is our position, and it will be readily understood by all intelligent and fair-minded men and women. If people choose to accept other interpretations, that is their affair, not ours. We intend to go straight on with our legitimate work, just as though there had been no so-called Convention at Chicago on February 18th, 1898, the whole of which we repudiate. Wishing success and happiness to all our former associates, in every noble aim and laudable endeavor.

I remain with fraternal good-will,

J. D. BUCK,
President T. S. A.